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# L E T T E R

To the Right Honourable

HORATIO WALPOLE, Esq;

Written Jan. 9, 1750-1,

By the Right Reverend

THOMAS SECKER, LL. D. *K*

LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD:

CONCERNING

BISHOPS IN AMERICA.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. and F. RIVINGTON, at the Bible and  
Crown, (N<sup>o</sup> 62) in St. Paul's Church-Yard,

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MDCC LXIX.

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Written Jan. 29. 1750-1

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MDCCLXX.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Letter was found among the Papers of the late Archbishop *Secker*. It was written, in Consequence of a Letter, dated *May 9, 1750*, from the late Lord *Walpole*, to the late Dr. *Sherlock*, Bishop of *London*; which was communicated by the latter to Bishop *Secker*, *Jan. 2, 1750-1*.

It is now printed in Obedience to an Order left with it under his Grace's own Hand (dated *May 25, 1759*) in these Words;

*Let the Letter, written by me to Mr. Walpole, concerning Bishops in America, be printed after my Death.*

THO. CANT.



# ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Letter was found among the Papers of the late Archbishop Seeker. It was written by Mr. John A. B. dated May 9, 1750, from the late Lord Bishop of London, which was commencing with "Return You my humble Thanks for the Honour you have done me, in commencing to me your Letter to the Bishop of London. I have read it with all the Attention and Regard, which is to be expected of your Superior Abilities, and long Experience, and meritorious Zeal for our present happy Establishment, and the public Welfare. But still I cannot see the Scheme, to which you relate, in the same Light that you have thought, if ever he hath considered you on the subject since, he hath doubted every thing material by way of Reply, which I can suggest, and much more: yet as he does not seem to have said any thing to me before, I beg leave to



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L E T T E R

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

*HORATIO WALPOLE, Esq.*

S I R, *St. James's Westminster, Jan. 9, 1750-1.*

I Return You my humble Thanks for the Honour you have done me, in communicating to me your Letter to the Bishop of *London*. I have read it with all that Attention and Regard, which is so justly due to your superior Abilities, and long Experience, and meritorious Zeal for our present happy Establishment, and the public Welfare. But still I cannot see the Scheme, to which it relates, in the same Light that you do. And though, if ever he hath conversed with you on the Subject since, he hath doubtless said every thing material by way of Reply, which I can suggest, and much more: yet as he doth not seem to have laid any thing further before you in Writing, I beg leave to

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trouble you with what hath occurred to me: which, as the Session is not yet begun, you may possibly have some Leisure to look upon.

The Thing proposed is, that two or three Persons should be ordained Bishops, and sent into our *American* Colonies, to administer Confirmation, and give Deacons and Priests Orders to proper Candidates, and exercise such Jurisdiction over the Clergy of the Church of *England* in those Parts, as the late Bishop of *London*'s Commissaries did, or such as it might be thought proper that any future Commissaries should, if this Design were not to take place. The Questions that arise on this Proposal, are: Is it a reasonable one in itself? And if it be, Are there any such Dangers of its being extended to introduce exorbitant Church Powers, or of its raising Uneasinesses Abroad or at Home, as may notwithstanding, at least for the present, be just Objections against it?

The Reasonableness of the Proposal, abstractedly considered, you seem, Sir, to admit. And indeed it belongs to the very Nature of Episcopal Churches, to have Bishops

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at proper Distances, presiding over them. Nor was there ever before, I believe, in the Christian World, an Instance of such a Number of such Churches, or a tenth Part of that Number, with no Bishop amongst them, or within some thousands of Miles from them. But the Consideration of the Episcopal Acts which are requisite, will prove the Need of Episcopal Residence more fully. Confirmation is an Office of our Church, derived from the primitive Ages; and when administered with due Care, a very useful one. All our People in *America* see the Appointment of it in their Prayer-books, immediately after their Catechism. And if they are denied it, unless they will come over to *England* for it; they are in Effect prohibited the Exercise of one Part of their Religion. Again, if they are to have no Ordinations there, they must either send Persons hither to be ordained, or take such as come to them from hence. Sending their Sons to so distant a Country, and so different a Climate, must be very inconvenient and disagreeable: and taking the Small-pox here is said to be peculiarly fatal to them. The Expence also must



be grievous to Persons of small Fortunes; such as most are, who breed up their Children for Orders: yet not sufficient to bring any Accession of Wealth to this Nation, that would be worth naming, were more of that Rank to come. But in fact, very few of them do. Therefore they must be supplied chiefly from hence. And not many in Proportion will go from hence, but Persons of desperate Fortunes, low Qualifications, and bad or doubtful Characters: who cannot answer, as they ought, the End for which they are designed. And it deserves Observation, that a great Part of them are *Scotch*. I need not say what Chance there is that Episcopal Clergymen of that Country may be disaffected to the Government. Now if instead of such, Natives of the Plantations were bred in their Colleges, with a View to Orders; notwithstanding which, their young Men of Fashion would still come to *England* for polite Accomplishments; this would afford convenient Opportunities to Parents of providing for some of their Children handsomely, and Encouragement to the Inhabitants to build and endow Churches,

Churches, to furnish Parsonage-houses, and stock Glebes, which now run to Ruin for want of it. And Clergymen whose Families were known, would be more respected, and have a better Influence than Vagabond Strangers. As to the Matter of Discipline and Jurisdiction over the Clergy, it would stand just as it hath done hitherto, only with this Difference, that the Exhortations and Directions of a Person invested with the Episcopal Character, would be more readily and carefully observed by the Parish Ministers, than those are which proceed from their Equals: and Misbehaviours might thus be more effectually prevented, than they can afterwards be punished and rectified. Nor is this a Point of Consequence only to themselves and their Hearers, but to the Public; as the Behaviour of the Clergy in general is. And if by reforming them, and introducing better Order into the Churches of our Communion, more of the Inhabitants should come over to it, as they naturally will, this would be a further public Benefit. For Members of the Church of *England* will think themselves more connected with *England*, than others.

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And supposing them not to be *Jacobites*, their Acknowledgment of the King's Supremacy will incline them to be dutifuller Subjects than the Dissenters, who do not acknowledge it.

But allowing the Establishment of Bishops in *America* to be reasonable in itself, the second Question is, Whether the Danger of increasing Church Power by Means of such an Establishment, be not a sufficient Objection against it? Now against Things evidently right and useful, no Dangers ought to be pleaded, but such as are both very probable and great; and from confirming and ordaining, no Danger of this Kind, I presume is apprehended. Yet these are the only new Powers that will be exercised. No other Jurisdiction is desired for the proposed Bishops than the preceding Commissaries have enjoyed; and even that, on this Occasion, may be ascertained and limited more accurately, if it be requisite. But here it is asked, How any Persons can undertake to promise, that no additional Powers shall hereafter be proposed and pressed on the Colonies, when Bishops have once been  
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settled? And strictly speaking, indeed, nothing of this Nature can ever be promised in any Case. But if the Dissenters had been asked, on their applying for a Toleration, how they could undertake to promise, that when that Point was once settled, nothing further, nothing hurtful to the established Church, should ever be proposed and pressed on the Government by them, surely this would not have been sufficient to defeat their Application. And yet what could they have answered? Not more, if so much, as can be answered in the present Case: that no such Thing is at all intended; and that though it were, there would be no Danger, either of the Intention taking Effect, or causing any Disturbance.

But on the former of these Assertions our Sincerity may be questioned. For it is argued, that Bishops doubtless think the Powers, which they have in this Nation, to be strictly just and reasonable; and consequently must be desirous of their taking place in the Colonies. Now for my own Part, and I believe my Brethren in general are of the same Mind, I have no Imagination, that Bishops  
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are intitled to, or that it would be right to give them, every where, the same Powers, and Privileges, that we happen, by the particular Constitution of this Country to possess here. Several Parts of that Constitution might perhaps full as well have been formed otherwise. Whether our Share of it might or not, I have never set myself to consider; I hope, and am persuaded, it is on the whole as harmless and useful a Branch, as many others; and I endeavour, so far as I am concerned, to make it so. But were I to live where Bishops were only on the same Footing, on which it is now proposed they should be in our Plantations, I should no more attempt to raise them higher, than I should to overturn the established Form of Government in any other Respect. It may indeed be prudent to suspect Clergymen, Ministers of State, all Men, to some Degree. But it cannot be prudent to refuse doing Things that are highly proper, on Account of little more than a Possibility, that an improper Use of them may be hereafter attempted. Some Bishops may be thought peculiarly fond of Church Power, and

and it concerns them when they are called upon, to defend themselves if they can. But at least I hope we are not all so fond of it, as to be aiming at that Point now, though we solemnly profess we are not. Yet I believe there scarce is, or ever was a Bishop of the Church of *England*, from the Revolution to this Day, that hath not desired the Establishment of Bishops in our Colonies. Archbishop *Tennison*, who was surely no High-Churchman, left by his Will 1000 *l.* towards it. And many more of the greatest Eminence, both dead and living, might be named, who were and are zealous for it: and yet have always been applauded by one Party, and censured by the other, for their Moderation. Or if Bishops, as such, must of Course be deemed partial, the Society for propagating the Gospel consists partly also of inferior Clergymen, partly too of Laymen. Now the last cannot so well be suspected of designing to advance Ecclesiastical Authority. Yet this whole Body of Men, almost ever since it was in being, hath been making repeated Application for Bishops in *America*; nor

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have the Lay Part of it ever refused to concur in them.

But though some, or many of the Advocates for this Proposal, were inclined to serve wrong Purposes by it, is there any Likelihood of its effecting those Purposes? Some have apprehended just the contrary, that it will tend to the Depression of the Hierarchy; as it will afford the Laity here an Example of *English* Bishops Abroad, with no other than spiritual Powers: which may tempt them to think of reducing us at Home to the same Condition. But I should be very willing, for the Benefit of those of our Communion in the Colonies, to run a greater Risque, than I conceive this to be. For the Fact is so notorious, that all our temporal Powers and Privileges are merely Concessions from the State; and the Act of Parliament for the Suffragan Bishops, under which several were made in the last Century, and others may now, exemplifies so fully the Possibility of Bishops without Peerages, and Consistory Courts; that we need have no Fear of any new Discovery to our Prejudice, from appointing a few such Bishops in *America*.

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But then the opposite Fear, of their growing up to what we are, would it be ever so great an Evil if it were to happen, seems as unlikely to happen, as most Things. I do not wonder indeed, that Persons who were in public Stations at the latter End of Queen *Anne's*, and the Beginning of the late King's Reign, should have strong Impressions remaining in their Minds of the Terrors of Ecclesiastical Influence, which was then so grossly abused to such wicked Purposes. But whoever attends to the present State of Things in this Respect, must see that there hath been a prodigious Change within the last thirty Years. Though too many both of the Clergy and the Laity are disaffected to the Government on one Account or another; yet of the former, even the lower Part are not near so generally possessed of the wild High-Church Notions, as they were. Nor was a Time ever known, when the upper Part were so universally free from them. And yet it is the upper Part only, that can do the least towards supporting any exorbitant Pretensions of Bishops in the Colonies. Then as to the Laity, I hope and believe the Admini-

stration and their Friends will always shew Countenance to the Clergy, as far as it is necessary; but there is visibly no Danger of their giving them any Encouragement, that may be hurtful. Amongst the Opposers of the Administration, few, if any, are at all more prejudiced in their Favour. And that Regard, which the Bulk of the People had for Religion and the Teachers of it, is greatly diminished, and diminishing daily, to a Degree, which I wonder wise Men are not alarmed at. For it is as important, even in a political View, that they should be able to do good, as that they should not be able to do harm. Nor do I find, that Bigotry to the Church prevails amongst the Members of it in our Colonies; or that there is any Chance of their making afterwards imprudent Additions to the Authority with which their Bishops will come to them at first. On the contrary, one Plea against the present Scheme is, that Bishops, even with the lowest Powers, will give them Jealousy and Offence. Now these two opposite Dangers cannot both be considerable; and I apprehend neither of them is: but surely the former is the less of the

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the two. The Bishop of *London's* Commissaries, I believe, have gained no Accessions to what was granted them originally. And Bishops will be still more narrowly watched by the Governors, by other Sects, by the Laity, and even the Clergy, of their own Communion. Nor will they have a greater Dread of any thing, if either so good or so discreet Men are chosen, as I promise myself will, than of losing all, by grasping at what doth not belong to them. Nor will their Patrons here attempt to defend them, in what they cannot but know will ruin them. As they will be appointed by the Crown, which, unless I mistake, the Commissaries are not; they will be such Persons, as the Crown can best confide in. And if it be thought necessary, a Right of recalling them may be reserved to the King. Whereas I believe, he hath not a Right of ordering the Bishop of *London* to recall his Commissaries. Upon the whole, if the present Disposition of his Majesty's Ministers and Subjects in Relation to Ecclesiastical Authority continues the same, as in all Likelihood it will, there can be no Danger from Bishops in  
*America.*

*America.* And if that Disposition should alter back to what it formerly hath been, which God forbid, they will be established with greater Powers, than are now desired for them.

It ought to be considered farther, that an Act of the last Session of Parliament, which passed without any Opposition from any body, hath expressly established *Moravian* Bishops in *America*; who have much higher and stricter Notions of Church Government and Discipline, than we have. Why then should there be such Fear of establishing Bishops of the Church of *England*? If for Want of these, the *Moravian* Bishops should ordain such Ministers for our People as they thought proper; or should they, by administering Confirmation, or by the Reverence of their Episcopal Character, be continually gaining Converts from us; it would be a very undesirable Thing on several Accounts; particularly on this, that most of them refuse taking Oaths, and bearing Arms. Besides, there have been Nonjuring *Jacobite* Bishops in our Colonies, not very long since, if there are none now. And Popish ones also, I apprehend,  
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have Recourse to them from time to time. At least the Bishop of *Quebeck* hath no small Influence in a very important new Settlement of ours. May not then the Neglect of having Bishops of our own, expose us to far greater Dangers, than the Appointment of them can?

But still the third Question remains, and is a very material one, Whether such an Appointment, however harmless and useful it might be otherwise, would not stir up dangerous Uneasinesses, Abroad or at Home? And here it is asked, if the Members of our Church in *America* would like to have Bishops among them, why have they never petitioned for them? Now surely their omitting it may well be ascribed, in Part to the Thoughtlessness of Mankind about their religious Concerns; which hath been so peculiarly great in those Countries, that some of them did not petition for Help, when they had no one Office of Christianity administered to them; and partly also to this, that probably too many of their Clergy think, they may both live more negligently, and have a better Chance for Preferment now, than if a  
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Bishop were to inspect them, and ordain Natives to be their Rivals. But the chief Reason, I doubt not, is, that the Inhabitants of the Colonies, living at such a Distance, and not knowing when an Application to the Government might be seasonable; and being assured, that the Bishops here, especially the Bishop of *London*, and the Society for propagating the Gospel, would always be attentive to this Point, have left it to Them. And They, to whom it is thus left, have received abundant Proofs, that very great Numbers of the Laity of the Church of *England* in those Countries, of higher as well as lower Rank, earnestly desire to have Bishops settled there, and think it would be a most valuable public Benefit. Nor have they found Cause to imagine that any Opposition would be made to it from that Quarter. Indeed of Course it should be presumed, and none but the very strongest Evidence admitted to the contrary, that all Persons desire to have within their Reach, the Means of exercising their Religion compleatly: which those of our Communion in *America*, and they alone of all his Majesty's Subjects, have not. It is

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true, some of them have provided against enlarging the Jurisdiction of the Commissaries: but none of them have expressed any public Reluctance to the Appointment of Bishops. I have learned from some Papers of Bishop *Gibson*, that there was a Design in *Charles* the Second's Time, to place one in *Virginia*; that Letters Patents for that Purpose are still extant; and that no other Reason appears, why the Design failed, but that the whole Endowment was to have been out of the Customs: whereas now it is not intended either to burthen the Crown, or tax the Subject. Nor can either be done hereafter but by Consent of both. Nor is it apprehended, that either will be needful. Some considerable Gifts have been already contributed: and probably more will, when the Scheme appears likely to take effect. There are likewise other Methods that might be proposed. And if they who are against it, think it will miscarry for want of a Maintenance for the Bishops, they need not take the Trouble of opposing it. But to go on. For above forty Years past, the Inhabitants there must have had frequent Notices, by various Ways, that such a Design was in Agitation:

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yet I have not heard, that any of them who are Members of our Church, have ever signified the least Dislike of it. Of late indeed, the *Presbyterians* or *Independants* of *New England* have. But they cannot be entitled to object against placing Bishops in any other Province, but their own, in which there never was any Thought of placing them. Whether they would object against Bishops coming to officiate occasionally amongst those of the Episcopal Persuasion in that Province, I know not. If they should, and persist in it, that may be omitted. But it seems hardly possible that they should, unless the gross Misrepresentations, that have been so officiously sent them from hence, have made them deaf to all Reason. It is true, they fled into *America* from the Oppressions of Ecclesiastical Power, exercised by Bishops. But they cannot fail to know how much that Power hath been long since lessened; and the Inclinations and the Principles of those, who are intrusted with it, altered for the better. If they were here at present, they would not think of flying from it. Why then should they be afraid of Bishops resorting



resorting to their Country now and then, without any Pretence of Authority over Them, but merely to perform some religious Acts in a few Congregations of Episcopal People, that are intermixed with them? This is no more than Dissenting Ministers do here by Law, and even Popish Priests and Bishops by Connivance.

But at least, before any Argument against the Scheme can be drawn from the Opinion of any of the Colonies, it ought to be fairly stated to them. This was the sole Intention of the Society for propagating the Gospel, in their late Order for sending Letters into *America*. They apprehended they might take the Liberty of transmitting a true Account of the Design, when others had taken that of transmitting a false one: and that endeavouring to procure Evidence in Relation to so material a Point in their Cause, against the Time it would come to be tried, was not blameable. However, if they judged ill in attempting it, His Majesty's Equity, and that of his Council, may doubtless be depended on, that they will not reject this Proposal, as disagree-

able to the Colonies, till a fair Inquiry shews, whether it be so or not.

But a further Objection against it, is, That however it may be received there, it will immediately raise Animosities here; produce Declamations in Pulpits, Controversies in Pamphlets, Debates in Parliament; revive the Distinction of High and Low among Churchmen, and terrify or provoke the Dissenters. Now amongst the Clergy, I conceive it can make no Dispute: for every Man of Character amongst them, doth and must wish it Success. If indeed it were to be brought upon the Carpet, and the Administration were to oppose it, some Clergymen might be tempted to say indecent Things of them. But the present Question is not, whether this Affair ought to be attempted, if, after being fully weighed, it be disapproved by the Ministry: that undoubtedly would be very wrong: but whether there be Reason for them to disapprove it. And certainly there is no Reason to fear inflaming and exasperating any of the Clergy, by declaring for it: on the contrary, scarce any thing would please them more universally. Nor,

I presume, is the Danger from Pamphlets to be thought very great : for most virulent ones are published daily both against Church and State, which yet give the Government no Terror at all. Contests in Parliament indeed would be a Matter of more serious Concern. But there seems no Necessity that this Affair should ever come into Parliament. For as the Law now stands, Suffragan Bishops may be ordained with the King's Approbation : and the Bishop of *London* may send those, instead of Presbyters, for his Commissaries : and they may confirm and ordain, as well as exercise the Jurisdiction which hath been usual there. But even if the Scheme should be brought into Parliament, it can be opposed only on these two Principles : that Episcopal Power is a great Grievance in this Nation, and that it must rise to an equal Height, wherever Bishops are : of which two Propositions, plain Experience proves the former to be false ; and I hope I have proved the latter to be so. Still some Members may be blinded by Ill-will to the Ecclesiastical Part of our Constitution. But surely these are not very many. Besides, the Administration will



will easily quiet such of them, as are their Friends. Then the Tories must be for Bishops, if it be only to preserve their own Credit. And the Remainder will probably find themselves too inconsiderable to stir.

Therefore the only Danger left, is that of alarming and provoking the Body of the Dissenters. Now a few busy warm Men, are not the Body of the Dissenters. And though they may affect to speak in the Name of the Whole, yet the Whole will neither think it right nor prudent to do all that these Gentlemen are pleased to intimate: some of whom also, after arguing properly with them, have owned, that they had little or nothing to object against appointing Bishops in Plantations of the Episcopal Communion. Dr. *Avery*, if I am rightly informed, hath acknowledged this to the Archbishop, as Mr. *Chandler* hath to me. And indeed there is no Modesty, in saying, we who are not of the established Church, demand, as a Matter of strict Justice, the full Exercise of our Religion here: but at the same time insist, that the King's Episcopal Subjects in *America*, with whom we have nothing at all to do,

do, shall not, even in those Provinces where they are the established Church, have the full Exercise of Theirs. Suppose the *Presbyterians*, or *Independants* in *America* thought as well of Confirmation as we do, and had not amongst them, a proper Officer to administer it: would not they think it insufferable to be denied such a one, and put under a Necessity of sending their Children hither for it, if they would have it? Supposing they were obliged only to send their Candidates for the Ministry, hither to be ordained; would they have been patient under it as long, as we have been? would they not have cried out loudly and incessantly for Relief? For my Part, I should have thought them so well entitled to it, as to have been a most hearty and zealous Advocate for them. It is not merely from my Attachment to the Church of *England*, that I am a Favourer of the Scheme in question: but from my Love of Religious Liberty; which in this Point, the Members of the Church of *England* in our Colonies do not enjoy. And I cannot imagine, how the Dissenters can pretend to be Lovers of it, and wish it to be withheld from

from their Fellow-Subjects. God forbid, that we should ever be moved, by this or any other Provocation, to wish it withheld in any Instance whatever from the Dissenters. And I believe there never was a Time, when the Clergy of this Land were in so mild a Disposition towards them. Whatever they may plead therefore, it is not Fear that induces them to oppose us on this Occasion; for they well know that we have neither Power nor Wish to oppress them, or their Brethren, in any Way. But it is a Wantonness of Spirit, which we have not deserved from them. It is an ostentatious Fondness of using their Influence with great Persons, to grieve Us, without serving themselves. And instead of being stirred up by their Friends Abroad to what they do, their Friends Abroad have been stirred up by Them. Now this is a Sort of Behaviour which an Administration had much better check by due Admonitions, than encourage its Growth: for how far it may grow, they cannot foresee. The Dissenters are sincere Well-wishers to the Civil Part of our present happy Establishment; and they are to be esteemed



and loved for it : but not to be gratified at the Expence of those, who sincerely wish well to both Parts. I am heartily sorry, that all the Members of our Church are not loyal and dutiful Subjects to the King : but much the greater Part of them are ; the Bishops and upper Clergy in particular : and surely their Desires merit as kind a Regard in this Case, as those of the Dissenters and their Leaders. We indeed do not threaten if we are disregarded. But they have no more Right to threaten than we : nor need they be feared, if they do. Their Threatnings have been very safely slighted in a Point which they have much more at Heart, I mean the Test : and so they may in this.

Permit me to add, that were those of our Communion, who are unhappily and unjustly prejudiced either against the King, or his Ministry, worse, in either of these Respects, than they are, still the Endeavour should be to make them better in both : for till that is done, our domestic Affairs will never be on a firm and easy Footing. Not that any thing wrong or hazardous should be done to reconcile them : but every thing that

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is right and harmless. Indeed such Instances of Kindness, when shewn them, I am grieved to say it, have not produced, and probably will not produce so great, and much less so speedy Returns as they ought: but some good Effect they must produce; and Perseverance in a due Regimen will at length compleat the Cure. On the other Hand, I apprehend, the Rejection of this Proposal will do the Government by far more Hurt amongst the Churchmen, than it can possibly do them Good amongst the Dissenters. When the Bishops are asked about it, as they frequently are, by their Clergy and others, what must they answer? We cannot with Truth express Disapprobation of it, or Indifference to it. And if we did, we should be thought unworthy of our Stations. Must we then be forced to say, that we are all satisfied of the absolute Fitness, the great Advantages, the perfect Safety of the Thing, and have repeatedly pressed for it; but cannot prevail? Would not this both sadly diminish our Ability of serving the Government, by shewing how little Credit we have with it; and make very undesirable Impressions on many Minds

Minds concerning the King, and those that are in Authority under Him; as incapable of being won by the Arguments or Intreaties of those, who have so strong a Zeal for them, to do an innocent Favour to the Church? Still, if we cannot succeed by respectful Applications, I know it is our Duty to make the best of the Matter; and not disturb the public Welfare, because in this Particular we are unable to promote it. I would speak as gently of the Affair as ever I could, where there was Danger of doing Harm; though I speak so earnestly, where I would fain hope to do Good. But no Mildness or Prudence, will wholly or nearly prevent the above-mentioned Consequences.

I am sensible it may be argued after all, that the Failure of so many Attempts on Behalf of this Scheme, is Presumption more than enough of there being some insuperable Objection against it. But there cannot well be any other Objection, than such as are known, and have been produced on the present Occasion. And if those have been sufficiently answered, we are not to yield up our own Understandings implicitly to the Judgments of other



other Persons in Times past: especially as those Judgments differ. For some great Men have continued as steadily to approve of Bishops in *America*, as others, to disapprove of them. And possibly the Reasons of the latter may in Part at least, have been only temporary, or they may have had too little serious Attention to religious Matters; or more Fear, than they needed, of bringing Difficulties on themselves by engaging in them. But whether any of these Things be so or not, in general it is certain, that many Designs have been long frustrated, or postponed, on one Account or other, which at length have been executed, and found beneficial.

I beg your Pardon, Sir, for being thus prolix: but I have gone through each Head as briefly as I could: and should you think me ever so much mistaken, you will do me but strict Justice in believing me to mean well; and to be, with the greatest Respect, and the most grateful Sense of your obliging Treatment of me,

S I R,

*Your most obedient*

*Humble Servant,*

THO. OXFORD.

